THE

# EVANGELICAL INTELLIGENCER.

(NEW SERIES.)

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## BIOGRAPHY.

### MEMOIR OF THE LATE REV. JOSEPH PARKIN,

Minister of the Gospel at Wigan.

'THE memory of the just is blessed;' 'the righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance.' Sanctioned by these sentiments, the biographical part of our magazine is peculiarly important and interesting. To the numerous sketches which have been given of eminent ministers and distinguished christians, we now add a brief memoir of the Rev. Joseph Parkin, late pastor of the church of Christ, of the Independent denomination, in Wigan, Lancashire, England.

This amiable and faithful servant of Christ was born at Sheffield, January 6, 1780. Both his parents dying when he was very young, he was left to the care of an aunt, with whom he resided during the early part of life, at Dronfield, Derbyshire. By the kind providence of God, he was apprenticed, at the usual period, to Mr. Roome, a deacon of the church assembling in Queen street, Sheffield. Here he enjoyed many religious advantages, to which he was indebted, under God, for his acquaintance with the gospel of Christ.

It appears that, during his childhood, he was the subject of religious concern, though he enjoyed no means of promoting his spiritual interests. In one of the papers which he has left behind him, adverting to this circumstance, and to the manner of his being brought to the knowledge of the truth, he remarks, 'From

early life, I well remember the serious impressions with which I was constantly attended, amidst all my juvenile pursuits. My connexions, however, were not favourable to early piety. Every symptom of an awakened conscience, or desire of seeking after God, was condemned as childish fanaticism, and suppressed by remonstrance. Too weak to withstand those who demanded my obedience, and too prone to listen to the syren voice of pleasure, I said, with the multitude of youth, 'Who will show me any good?' About the age of 14, a kind providence brought me under the ministry of the Rev. Mr. Brewer, then of Sheffield. Immediately, the convictions of my sinful condition were renewed and deepened; and, I bless God, that, under him, I trust, I was brought to that adorable Saviour, whom I now esteem as the only ground of my hope, and the object of my supreme affection.'

Modesty and self-diffidence had for some time concealed the impressions which were made on his mind; but, at length, an extraordinary providence wrested from him a testimony which he could not withhold. In the middle of the night there was a most dreadful storm of thunder and lightning. The whole family, and he among the rest, arose to prayer. Such were the wisdom and the fervour of his addresses to the throne of grace, that his master could not help remarking, 'the youth that can pray as he does, must be under the teachings and influences of the Spirit of God!'

From this time, the light kindled in his soul, and began to shine more and more, to the great satisfaction of his master and of the religious society with which he assembled. Athirst for spiritual improvement, he met regularly, once or twice a week, with the serious young men of the congregation, for reading, conversation, and prayer; and he has often expressed the very great pleasure and profit which he enjoyed in these exercises; nor was he concerned merely for his own edification. Experiencing the blessed effects of evangelical religion in his own soul, he felt exceedingly desirous of introducing the gospel of the grace of God to the favourite scene of his early days, the village of Dronfield. Thither it was sent, through his instrumentality; and there it has ever since continued to be dispensed with success!

Having joined the church where he had received his spiritual birth, and given evidence to his brethren of his promising talents for preaching, he was encouraged to exercise his abilities in the neighbouring villages. These first efforts proving acceptable, he

was introduced to the academy at Rotherham, that he might enjoy a regular course of preparatory studies for the christian ministry.

During the latter part of his residence at the academy, he preached both in the neighbourhood and to distant congregations, with great acceptance and usefulness; but his youthful appearance generally produced, at first, an unfavourable impression. This was so much the case when he applied at the Quarter Sessions for a license to preach, that the worthy chairman was very reluctant to grant it; and signified his determination to move in the House of Commons, of which he is an honourable member, for an act to limit the age of persons applying for licenses. He gave the intimation accordingly; assuring the house, that 'he had been compelled, by the laws of this realm, to license *boys* (without any education) of *seventeen*, to be the guardians of our souls, and the teachers of our holy religion!' This mistake has already been corrected by a letter from Dr. Williams to Mr. Parsons, published in a well-written pamphlet.*

* Parson's Vindication of the Dissenters against the Charge of Democratic Scheming.

We take the liberty of introducing this letter, not merely because it relates to an interesting circumstance in the life of Mr. Parkin, but because it serves to explain the origin of a case, which might have produced the most lamentable effects.

TO MR. PARSONS, LEEDS.

Dear Sir, Rotherham, Dec. 12, 1801.

In reply to your inquiry concerning a passage in a late pamphlet, which relates to granting licenses to 'boys (without any education) of seventeen,' I have reason to think that the declaration 'made in the British senate, by one of its members,' was in allusion to a student under my care. At the quarter sessions held at Rotherham, October, 1799, the student, whose name I need not mention, except by the initials J. P. applied for a license, as a dissenting teacher. The chairman, observing his youth, intimated that he would bring forward the case of limiting the age of applicants for licenses. The truth is, the young man was then in his twentieth year.

You may suppose it gave me some alarm, that a mistake of this nature should be the ostensible occasion of a legislative step, so important in its consequences: I, therefore, concluded to write to the gentleman who announced the design, and to state that, if this was the case to which he alluded, his information was not correct, stating to him the

When Mr. Parkin's studies at Rotherham were nearly completed, he was sent, on probation, to the congregation in Wigan. After preaching there a few sabbaths, he received a unanimous invitation to exercise his ministry among them statedly. This invitation he accepted, and entered on his labours in August, 1803. In the same month of the following year, he was ordained to the pastoral office; and, in four or five weeks after that, he married Miss Wightman, of Mansfield, a young lady of amiable manners, of unaffected piety, admirably calculated to be a help-meet to him, and a grand-daughter of the venerable Abraham Booth, of London.

As a christian and as a minister, Mr. Parkin excelled many. He possessed an uncommon degree of prudence. He united inflexible firmness and fidelity with an equal degree of meekness and affection. His devotional temper, and relish for religious conversation, were manifest to all who enjoyed the pleasure of his acquaintance. In his preparatory studies for the pulpit, he was exceedingly close; and his sermons displayed deep thought, as well as much seriousness and fervour. Very few young ministers, perhaps, possessed a more ardent thirst for ministerial improvement. Under the direction of his respected tutor, he had collected, though a small, yet a very valuable library; which, with him, was not for show, but for use. Following the apostolical exhortation, he gave attendance to reading; and his profiting appeared to all. On every occasion, he manifested an earnest concern for the cause of Christ, not merely by indolent wishes, but by arduous exertions. His labours were not confined to his own congregation, though they justly claimed and enjoyed his principal attention; but, in the villages around, he preached the glad tidings of salvation by Christ; and the fruits of his ministry, when observed in the

real case. Had the allusion been made to any other fact, I have reason to think the civility of Mr. M. A. T—r would have given me the information.

I must add, that I believe he was the youngest who ever applied from this seminary for a certificate. He was, however, at this time, a divinity student, of good abilities, regularly admitted into this place by a committee of gentlemen, whose business it is, in conjunction with the tutors, after four months' probation, closely to investigate the natural capacities, the moral character, and religious knowledge of the candidates. Should this plain statement appear calculated to rectify any *published* mistake, it is very much at your service, from, dear sir, your friend and brother,

EDWARD WILLIAMS.

conversion of sinners and the edification of saints, afforded him the liveliest satisfaction. His personal religion, his ministerial diligence, his fervent desire of usefulness, and his anxious concern for the purity and strictness of christian discipline, in the church under his care, might be exemplified by extracts from his diary; but these would extend the memoir beyond the bounds of a periodical publication.

The ministerial labours of this excellent young man were, alas! soon completed. In the latter end of the summer 1807, his health appeared to be in a declining state, though not so as to create any considerable alarm. In the winter he grew worse; and his disorder seemed to be much increased by a short journey, in which he was exceedingly wet, both in going and returning. Several of his friends attributed his illness to too great exertion, especially in preaching in the neighbouring villages. Their intimation of this cut him to the very heart. To a very intimate acquaintance, he spoke of it with tears, saying, ' My friends accuse me, in this respect, very unjustly. I am sure I never suffered any harm from preaching. It grieves me exceedingly to hear them say that I have; and, especially, lest the report should prove an occasion of causing any of my brethren in the ministry to slacken their diligence in the work of the Lord.'

Apprehending that he was threatened by a pulmonary consumption, he consulted Dr. Jarrold, of Manchester; through whose skilful prescriptions the progress of his disorder appeared, for a season, to be hopefully arrested. In the spring of 1808 he seemed to revive; and, in the month of May, was attended by Mrs. Parkin to the Isle of Man, in hopes that the voyage and the sea air might be serviceable. In about nine weeks he returned home, apparently much recovered; and immediately, after a silence of several months, resumed his labours on the first sabbath in August. His first discourse, after his return, was a very impressive one, evidently the language of his own experience and prospects, from 2 Cor. iv. 17. " Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." During upwards of four months after, he continued to preach generally twice on the sabbath, one of the members of the church, when necessary, engaging in prayer, and reading a sermon. Every persuasion of his friends to spare himself was unavailing, till his strength was completely exhaust-

ed. ‘ I must study and speak for my Master,’ said he, ‘ as long as I am able.’ His last sermon, which was preached on Dec. 18, 1808, was from Heb. iii. 1. “ Consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus.” He had scarcely strength to ascend the pulpit; or, when there, to sustain himself. His thoughts were luminously arranged; and it was evident that he felt his subject; but his voice was feeble, and all present were persuaded that this was his last public effort. After the service, whilst the congregation were separating, he stood pensively, leaning on the desk, for a few minutes, as though he were taking his solemn farewel of the place where he had delighted to publish the salvation of Jesus.

After he had ceased from pulpit exercises, his mind was still intent on usefulness. Among other schemes of doing good, he wrote a little piece to be pasted at the beginning of bibles, to be given to the Sunday School Children; exhibiting a comprehensive view of the plan of salvation: which was, probably, the last effort of his pen: but, owing to the rapid progress of his disorder, it proceeded no further, before his death, than a proof-sheet, which he revised.

Towards the latter end of January, 1809, he grew considerably worse; and, for some days, completely lost his voice. This, he whispered to a friend, was peculiarly afflictive to him, as it prevented him from expressing how inestimably precious the Lord Jesus was to his soul; adding, ‘ He is better in sickness than in health.’ On the 28th, one of his dear friends called to see him. Entering the chamber, he found him laid on a sofa, just recovering from the fatigue of being lifted from his bed. Feeble as he was, perceiving his friend, he beckoned with his finger; desired him to sit beside him; and, clasping his hand with the most affectionate tenderness, he held a long and most interesting conversation; in which he dwelt especially on the preciousness of Christ: on his firm reliance on the word of God: on the support which he derived from the well-ordered covenant of grace: on his freedom from the terror of death. After thus enlarging on the state of his own mind, he inquired after one of his christian friends; and exclaimed, with an expressive emphasis, ‘ I do love the image of Jesus in his people!’ His visitant, perceiving that he was much exhausted, expressed his fears that he would injure himself by too much exertion; to which he replied, ‘ I am, indeed, very

weak; I have, for some time, ministered to you; you must now minister to me.' He then desired prayers; in which he united with delightful fervour.

On the 29th, which was the sabbath but one preceding his death, another of the friends spent the whole day with him. On entering his chamber, about eight in the morning, Mr. P. gave him his hand, and whispered (for he could only whisper) 'My days are now fast concluding; but I know whom I have believed, and find him all-sufficient: he is faithful.' His friend reminding him of the strong desire which he had formerly expressed, that he might be enabled to glorify God in his death, and of his desire being now fulfilled, he answerd, 'Yes! a Father afflicts, and a Father supports.' Speaking of the frame of his mind, he said, 'I feel no rapturous emotions, but I feel myself safe in the hands of Jesus; because he lives, I shall live also.' After a fainting fit, of which he had several in the course of the day, looking at his friends, he said, 'I am returned to you again. I hoped,—but let me not indulge an impatient desire: my time is in thine hands, my God.'

Towards night, he seemed averse to conversation; his countenance evinced much distress; and it was suspected that he was suffering some darkness of mind. After a long silence, his friend spoke to him of that faith which overcomes the world. Fixing his eyes upon him very earnestly, he replied, 'Ah! Brother, you can but judge according to appearances; God only knows the deceitfulness of the heart.' He was too weak, and too much agitated to proceed; but desired prayer. Afterwards he said, that the enemy had been buffetting him. During his residence at the Isle of Man, he had been dreadfully assaulted with doubts respecting futurity, the immortality of the soul, &c. A recurrence to the sacred volume had banished his suspicions, and enlivened his hope; but the very possibility of being harassed again, in a similar manner, appeared to terrify him. Recovering from this renewed attack of his spiritual adversary, light dawned again upon his soul; he rejoiced in God his Saviour; and was much encouraged and comforted by the thought suggested to him, 'That where the head is, there the members must be; and that nothing can separate them from his love.'

On the Monday morning early, his friend left him quite composed and cheerful. To some others he mentioned, in the course

of the day, the severe temptations of Satan, which he had experienced in the preceding night. 'I had well nigh given up all for lost,' said he, 'but Jesus reanimated me, and he is now more precious than ever.' He added, 'Death and I have had a hard struggle. I am still on the field with him; but Jesus is there too.' Being reminded that Christ is the captain of our salvation; and that, looking unto him, we are directed to take the shield of faith, and the sword of the spirit, he clasped his hands, and fixed his eyes, and, with inexpressible fervour, cried out, 'Jesus! thou didst pray for Peter, that his faith might not fail! Oh! pray for one ten thousand times more unworthy than Peter, that, in my last conflict, my faith fail not.' Recovering from a fainting fit, he exclaimed, 'What! returned again! I thought I had been going. I hope I shall go this afternoon. Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly!' For some time after, he lay composed, and seemed to be engaged in prayer. At length, turning to those about him, he said, 'I have not seen Jesus as he is; but I have had a sweet interview with him: I have been holding sweet converse with my Saviour.' The same evening, apprehending that his departure was nearer than it proved to be, he anxiously inquired of a female friend, 'Do you think that Jesus will take me to himself to-night?' Being informed that she thought not, he replied, 'Well, I would not be impatient;' and afterwards, 'If he does not receive me into his presence, I hope he will admit me into his antichamber.' Taking leave of a young friend, he said, 'I trust we shall meet before the throne, and tune our harps together there. Beware of this deluding world.'

Contrary to his own expectation, and that of his friends, he lived eight or nine days after this, enjoying, with little interruption, the same happy frame of mind. On one occasion, he complained of great deadness of spiritual affections, and wondered at the possibility of being so near perfect felicity, without being absorbed in the amazing prospect: 'but,' said he, 'I am not yet set free from this sinful body.' His constant, darling theme, was the person, the offices, the atonement, the intercession, of the Saviour. 'Oh! I wanted to see you,' said he to a friend who called on him; 'I wanted to see you, that we might talk of Jesus; He only can satisfy me; all is shadow besides! How strong his love! How wonderful his grace!'

A medical gentleman, who had occasionally visited him, remarked to him, that he had never witnessed so much calm collectedness in a dying person. 'Sir,' said he, 'it is entirely owing to my full confidence in the power and love of Christ, and his finished work of salvation: there is no other ground of hope.'

A friend from a neighbouring village, who is strenuously active in maintaining the preaching of the gospel there, visited him about two days before his dissolution; to whom he said, 'Brother, many may think you are doing too much; that you should not be lavish; but when you are placed in my situation, you will think every thing you have done too little for Him who gave himself for you.'

He was very earnest with those of his friends, who take an active part in the Sunday Schools, not to slacken their diligence. The welfare of the church and congregation lay very near his heart; and he often expressed his fervent concern that they might be directed, in their choice of a successor, to an humble and pious, as well as a judicious and lively minister.

In the evening preceding his death, he spent above half an hour in prayer, with a distinct and audible voice, so as he had not been able to speak for a long time before. His afflicted wife, child, friends, church, the cause of Christ in the villages which he had visited, the Sunday School, the nurse, the servant, all successively engaged his attention, and furnished matter of intercession the most copious and affecting.

The next day, Wednesday, Feb. 8, from nine in the morning till one at noon, was occupied with the most painful struggles, which terminated in his happy deliverance from the body of sin and of mortality.

Thus was this excellent young man cut off in the prime of youth, in the acceptable discharge of his ministerial labours, and in the prospect of increasing usefulness; leaving behind him one child, and a widow who was expecting almost immediate confinement. How mysterious are the ways of Providence! How loudly does the death of such young labourers in the vineyard call upon their surviving brethren, to work while it is called To-day, knowing that the night cometh, in which no man can work!

On the Sabbath after his death, the mortal remains of Mr. P. were interred by Mr. Hacking, of Darwen; and, on the Sabbath but one following, Mr. Roby, of Manchester, improved the mournful providence, in a discourse from Heb. xiii. 7, 8. to a very numerous and deeply affected audience.

## MISCELLANY, ORIGINAL AND SELECTED.

### THE DANGER OF DELAYING TO FORWARD THE WORK OF THE LORD.

We read, in the book of Exodus, that, when Moses was commanded to raise up the tabernacle, the people were invited to contribute materials. Now, the fulness of the earth belongeth to the Lord: without their aid, he could have finished the work; but, to gratify and to honour them, he allowed Moses to take an offering of every one who gave it willingly with his heart. Exod. xxv.

As soon as this was known through the camp, men and women came in crowds, bringing the Lord's offering. Gold, and silver, and brass, linen, and jewels, and bracelets, were consecrated to the God of the whole earth. Exod. xxxv. Yea, their hearts were so stirred up, and their spirits made so willing, that at last it was found necessary to cause it to be proclaimed, saying, 'Let neither man nor woman make any more work for the offering of the sanctuary! So the people were restrained from bringing.' Exod. xxxvi. This ready liberality of the generation which perished in the wilderness, ought not to be overlooked.

But, from the account given in one of the chapters cited above, it is evident that these offerings were not made by all whose circumstances would have enabled them to contribute. The contributors are denominated, 'as many as were willing-hearted,' and 'all the wise-hearted:' a mode of expression which implies that there were some who wanted this willingness and wisdom of heart.

I have sometimes thought that the proclamation for restraining the people from giving their offerings, would occasion many varied displays of character and feeling. From considering human nature as it now appears, we may suppose that scenes something like the following would occur among the people:

The appointed heralds sound the trumpets, the people run to learn the cause; amongst them, a young woman listens to the proclamation, and hears with grief, that the time for making offerings has expired. Her aged mother had lifted up the corner of the curtain of the tent, and saw her daughter returning in tears: she inquires the cause. The young woman answers, 'O, mother! you would not allow me to offer these ear-rings yesterday, and now it is too late!' "Comfort, my child," says the mother, "I have a broken bracelet here, which I will send this evening as from you." 'Ah, mother! you know that my father, Eleazer, always said, *Give unto the Lord the best*. I would give the ear-rings, were they a thousand times better; but, alas! it is too late! nothing will now be accepted! they have more than enough for the work!' "Is it even so? then, my child, it is most plain that you ought to be well satisfied. You have your ear-rings, and yet the sanctuary is amply provided." 'Alas! this is my grief that I am shut out, or rather that I have shut out myself from the pleasure of glorifying God with my substance. Oh! that I had remembered sooner another saying of my father's, 'Hast thou a design of doing good?—hasten to accomplish it.'

'In another part of the camp, a man of the tribe of Manasseh was seen burdened with a load of brass. Meeting a friend, he let down the load from his shoulders, and stopped to talk as follows: 'Why,' says he in great anger, 'this is intolerable, to issue their orders to-day, and to alter their orders to-morrow. As if to be shut out from the whole world in a wilderness were not grievance enough.' "To what is it that you refer?" 'Why, to the business about the offerings. They ordered us to bring the best of our possessions; and now, after I had brought a load from one end of the camp to the other, they told me that they would not take it in.' "Nabal, you are wrong," replied Caleb; "you were not *ordered* to bring an offering: you were only permitted, if your heart inclined you." 'To be ordered and to be permitted, is much the same thing to me, in the present state of my family.' "Your family is your greatest honour, and ought to be your greatest comfort." 'Why, I do not deny that they are comfortable enough to me, in many respects; but ever since the passage of ——.' "Hold, Nabal, I am afraid that you are going to speak unadvisedly. The fervent devotions and exalted strains of praise,

expressed by your wife and her three daughters, after the passage of the Red Sea, were like the inspiration of the Almighty." 'Well, as to that I say nothing: but this business of the offerings has been from first to last a trouble to me. You know that in Egypt I dealt in brass; and, in the whole camp I may be bold to say it, there is not a better judge of brass than I am; and this piece of brass which I was carrying, I affirm to be more precious than gold. As soon then as the business of the offerings came abroad, my wife and our daughters gave me no rest till I should promise to present it as an offering for the sanctuary. I gave them some evasive answer, and carried another piece of brass to the elders: but fool as I was, I could not keep my own secret. I told them that the one would answer for the work as well as the other; and that I was still rich in my brass. My wife presently trembled, and fainted away. When she came to herself, she looked upon me, and upbraided me; wept bitterly, and said that she was most miserable. I urged her to explain her meaning; she was silent: I besought her; she was still silent. I conjured her in the name of the Lord. She then said, 'O Nabal, my beloved Nabal, O that this brass of thine had gone down with the Egyptians to the depth of the sea! I have an awful foreboding that it shall prove thy ruin, unless it is now offered to the Lord. I am afraid, thy soul shall soon be required of thee; for thou hast lied to the Lord God of Israel.' I saw that she was greatly affected; and I promised to contribute this brass also. She and her daughters spent the whole night in prayers; and, from what I overheard, I am persuaded that their affection for me is very strong. In the morning I set out with the offering. I heard, by the way, that they would accept no farther contribution. However, as I greatly wished to have done with it, I went forward and entreated them to accept my offering. They told me, that there was one rule for the rich and for the poor; and that they had no power to depart from it.' "O Nabal! what can riches profit in the day of wrath? Thou art not judged worthy to have thy brass laid up in the presence of Jehovah: thou mayest still call it thine; but never shalt thou have another such opportunity of consecrating it. If thy soul is thus shut out from God, ah! what horrors of deep darkness follow!'

'The scene at the place for receiving the offerings was all confusion. A multitude of all descriptions was collected. There a

man was seen with a parcel of rams' skins, dyed red. Here was a woman with blue, purple, and scarlet, fine linen. Her neighbour had in one hand a beautiful box of jewels, and in the other a pot of precious spices; and before them stood an old man with his two sons, bearing a heavy load of shittim-wood. Some were clamorous, some were weeping. One, while they spoke to each other, explaining the hardships of their several conditions, in losing the opportunity of offering. Again they addressed the elders with arguments and entreaties. The answer of the elders was always the same, 'We have no power of dispensing with the proclamation.'

'Well!' says a man, as he turned to go away with a bundle of badger-skins on his back, 'I take you all to witness, that I was willing to have offered all these skins; and there is a dozen of them: but if they will not take them, what can I do but carry them home again?' "Why, I am sure, Esau, thou couldst have brought them some days ago?" 'Yes, to be sure I could; but if I chose not to bring them till now, what is that to thee?' 'Perhaps, it is nothing to me,' replies the elder; 'but it seems to say, that thou hast but little reason to complain; for hadst thou been at all anxious, thou couldst have made thine offering sooner.'

"Was ever any thing so unfortunate!" cries a woman in the crowd. "It was always in my mind to bring this yarn; but I thought that there was no need to be in such haste as some of my neighbours were; and now I shall be the only woman in our six tents whose offering has been rejected." 'Daughter,' says the old man with the shittim-wood, tapping her on the shoulder, 'remember hereafter, whatsoever thy hand finds to do, do it with all thy might. For my own part, I only wish that I had offered at once all that I had to offer.' "Nay, father Uzzah," says one of the elders to him, "thou art too covetous of the pleasure of offering. How canst thou blame thyself? Thou hast brought several presents of that wood, and they are found to be of very great use in the work." 'O!' cries the old man, 'he is the God of all my mercies; he has redeemed me from all evil; he has led me, and fed me these fourscore years: what can I render unto him for all his benefits unto me? I wish that I had been here yesterday.' "Father," says his elder son, "only remember how you were employed yesterday. To convert a sinner from the error of his way, is as acceptable a service as to assist in raising the holy

place. The Lord knoweth, for he searcheth all hearts; and he it was who taught us, he knoweth that it is in our hearts to offer ourselves and all that we have to him."

'As they were going home, Uzzah addressed his sons as follows: 'You will observe, my children, that the greater part of this crowd which is now so noisy, is composed of the careless daughters and sons of Belial, who have often troubled the camp. This is always their way. When an opportunity of doing, or of receiving, good is offered them, then they slight it, and neglect all counsel: but when the opportunity is withdrawn, then who so anxious as they to regain what is irrecoverable! So men acted in the days of Noah: they believed not in the threatened deluge, till the descending waters and swollen fountains proved the wisdom and the friendship of Noah's admonitions. So have I seen men slight the promise of the woman's son, of the son of Abraham. In sickness they felt their want; their unsupported hearts failed them. I have tried to comfort them by the truth of the Deliverer who shall come; but their hearts were generally barred against it. They were anxiously looking for some comfort, yet the most comfortable light of the promise they could not see. Though I endeavoured to strengthen the light, yet to them, all was darkness. Alas! it was too late!

"Remember, my sons, that whom God calls to any duty, he calls to it now. To delay is to refuse. I saw in the crowd to-day a friend of mine, who is a very worthy man in other respects, but he is strangely unwilling to begin to do any thing. I am almost glad that he lost the opportunity of making his offering, as I hope that the grief, which I am sure he will feel, will help to correct his tardiness."

If there is any thing of nature and probability in the cases supposed above, the moral which they teach may be easily applied to existing circumstances.

The Lord is strengthening the cords of Zion. The wise and the willing-hearted are allowed to consecrate a part of their gain to this service of the God of the whole earth. Let us see that we do not linger long as the slothful! Time is too short, and the advances of death too rapid, to allow a mortal creature to be dilatory! He who indulges a disposition to delay, will likely leave unaccomplished some good purposes, which he might have overtaken, if his zeal had been more fervent.

Perhaps, there are not many serious men who, on the death of some thoughtless connexion, have not felt that they have irrecoverably lost opportunities of serving him.

And how many are there in the habit of hearing the gospel, who have only got the length of intending, at some future period, to begin to lay to heart its doctrines! Alas! they know not, nor will they understand that this is the very rock on which thousands have split! An intention of believing, which is never followed by faith, cannot profit, at present, him who forms it; and, hereafter, he will find, to his confusion, that, when he stands speechless before the Judge, it is too late to begin to attend to the gospel. *Now* is the accepted time! *now* is the day of salvation! *To-day*, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts! Yet there is room, but anon, it shall be said, The door is shut.

JONADAB.

## THE LAW OF RETALIATION.

*Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.* Matt. vii. 1, 2.

THESE words contain a caution against censoriousness and cruelty, enforced by a motive which is derived from the law of retaliation. The ancient Romans had their *lex talionis*, but I shall confine myself chiefly to the Scriptures. The Scriptures abound with phrases which allude to it, and with facts which exemplify it. "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed. And if any mischief follow, then thou shalt give life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burning for burning, wound for wound, stripe for stripe. Even as I have seen, they that plough iniquity and sow wickedness, reap the same. He made a pit and digged it, and is fallen into the ditch which he made. His mischief shall return upon his own head, and his violent dealing shall come down upon his own pate. Woe to thee that spoilest, and thou wast not spoiled; and dealest treacherously, and they dealt not treacherously with thee! When thou shalt cease to spoil, thou shalt be spoiled; and when thou hast made an end to deal treacherously, they shall deal treacherously with thee. The children also of Judah and the children of Jerusa-

lem have ye sold unto the Grecians, that ye might remove them far from their border. Behold I will raise them out of the place whither ye have sold them, and will return your recompense upon your own head. And I will sell your sons and your daughters into the hands of the children of Judah, and they shall sell them to the Sabeans, to a people far off: for the Lord hath spoken it. Therefore it is come to pass, that as he cried, and they would not hear; so they cried, and I would not hear, saith the Lord of hosts. Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword. He shall have judgment without mercy, that hath showed no mercy. For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, if any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book, And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city and from the things which are written in this book." Gen. ix. 6. Ex. xxi. 23, 25. Job iv. 8. Ps. vii. 15, 16. compared with Prov. xxvi. 27 and Eccl. x. 8, 9. Isa. xxxiii. 1. Joel iii. 6, 7, 8. Zech. vii. 13. Matt. xxvi. 52. James ii. 13. Rev. xxii. 18, 19. See also 2 Tim. ii. 12. Rev. xvi. 6.

*SCRIPTURE FACTS.*

1. The men of Sodom sin gluttonously with fulness of bread: four kings take away their provisions. Their eyes are full of uncleanness: they are smitten with blindness. They burn with unnatural lust: they are burnt with miraculous fire. *Gen.* xiv. 11.

2. Jacob, in the early part of his life, is guilty of deception. Mark how in future life his troubles arise from deception. First, he is deceived with Leah instead of Rachel; next, Laban deceives him by changing his wages ten times. But the most affecting instance is that of his own childrens' deceiving him when they brought to him Joseph's bloody coat. *Gen.* xxxvii. 31.

3. Joseph's brethren smart under this scourge in their imprisonment. "And they said one to another, we are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear; therefore is this distress come upon us. And Reuben answered them, saying, spake I not unto you, saying, Do not sin against the child, and

ye would not hear? therefore, behold also, his blood is required." *Gen.* xlii. 21, 22.

4. Pharaoh refuses to liberate Israel, God's first born. "And it came to pass that at midnight the Lord smote all the first-born in the land of Egypt." Pharaoh publishes an edict to drown the Hebrew male children: in the event he is drowned himself. *Ex.* xii. and xiv.

5. The Egyptians withhold wages from the Israelites: the Israelites go away with their jewels. *Ex.* xi. 3. xii. 36.

6. Nadab and Abihu offer strange fire to the Lord: strange fire from the Lord burns them to death. *Lev.* x. 2.

7. Adonibezek furnishes a striking instance, "And Adonibezek fled; and they pursued after him and caught him, and cut off his thumbs and his great toes. And Adonibezek said, three score and ten kings, having their thumbs and their great toes cut off, gathered their meat under my table: as I have done, so God hath requited me. And they brought him to Jerusalem, and there he died." *Jud.* i. 6, 7. *See an admirable sermon on this passage, in Bp. Kidder's twelve sermons.* 1697.

8. The author of the book of Judges makes the following reflections on the case of Abimelech and the Shechemites. "Thus God rendered the wickedness of Abimelech, which he did unto his father in slaying his seventy brethren: and all the evil of the men of Shechem did God render upon their heads." *Jud.* ix. 56, 57.

9. Agag was a bloody king of Amalek. "And Samuel said, as thy sword hath made women childless, so shall thy mother be childless among women. And Samuel hewed Agag in pieces before the Lord in Gilgal. 1 *Sam.* xv. 33.

10. Abner kills Asahel, Joab's brother: Joab kills Abner. 2 *Sam.* iii. 27.

11. Joab was David's nephew, and the generalissimo of his army; a brave, but a bloody man. He consented to Abner's cruel and wanton proposal of a battle between twelve of David's and twelve of Ishbosheth's men. He ordered innocent Uriah into the front of the battle. When Absalom hung by the hair of his head in the oak, he took three darts and thrust them through his heart. David, on his death bed, required Solomon to punish him

for the murder of Abner and Amasa. Accordingly, Benaiah stabs him at Solomon's command. 1 *Kings*, ii. 34.

12. David's adultery was punished, first, by the incest of his son Amnon with Tamar; afterwards by Absalom's sinning with his father's wives in the sight of all Israel. Was he guilty of murder? *The sword shall not depart from his house.* First, the adulterous child dies; then Amnon is murdered at a feast; afterwards Absalom is stabbed while hanging alive in the oak. 2 *Sam.* xii. 10.

13. Jeroboam stretches forth his hand against a man of God: in a moment God stretches forth his hand against *him*. "And it came to pass, when king Jeroboam heard the saying of the man of God, which had cried against the altar in Bethel, that he put forth his hand from the altar, saying, lay hold on him. And his hand which he put forth against him, dried up, so that he could not pull it in again to him." 1 *Kings*, xiii. 4.

14. Ahab's fate is remarkable. "Hast thou killed and also taken possession? Thus saith the Lord, in the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth, shall dogs lick thy blood, even thine." 1 *Kings*, xxi. 19. See also *ch.* xxii. 38.

15. Haman prepares a gallows for Mordecai, fifty cubits high: upon that gallows Haman is hanged himself. *Esth.* vii. 16.

16. Daniel's accusers get him thrown into a den of lions; into that very den they themselves are thrown. *Daniel* vi. 24.

17. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego are cast into a burning fiery furnace: the flames of that very furnace consume the *executioners*, while the servants of God are unhurt. *Dan.* iii.

18. The Jews put Jesus to death by crucifixion. The mob exclaimed, "Crucify him, crucify him." About forty years after this, they had crucifixion enough. They were crucified, it is said, five hundred in a day, till there was a scarcity of wood for crosses. They bought Jesus for a trifle, (about three pounds fifteen shillings) and they were sold for a trifle themselves. They put Jesus to death at the feast of the passover; at the same feast, afterwards, they were destroyed themselves.

Many other illustrations may be found in the history of the world. I shall mention a few of them.

19. Procustes was stretched to death by Theseus (as Plutarch

tells us) upon his bed: and that was the kind of death he had been wont to inflict upon others. *Bp. Kidder.*

20. Eusebius tells us that Maximinus's eyes dropt out of his head before he died; and adds that he did but endure therein that punishment himself which he had formerly devised against the christians. *idem.*

21. The principal persons concerned in the gunpowder plot, were maimed or destroyed by gunpowder, at a house where they attempted to take refuge. *Hume's History of England.*

22. Charles IX of France made the canals of Paris stream with protestant blood: he died soon after, blood streaming from all parts of his body.

23. Pope Alexander the sixth unawares drank of the poisoned cup which he had prepared for others.

24. What multitudes were put to death by the revolutionary tribunal of France, under the direction of Robespierre! Is it not remarkable that by that very tribunal he fell?

25. Austria and Prussia took an active part in the dismemberment of Poland: have they not since been dismembered themselves?

*REFLECTIONS.*

1. There is certainly a Providence that takes accurate notice of human affairs. Who can believe that the facts which have here been recited, were all matters of chance? *Verily, there is a God that judgeth in the earth.*

2. God is holy, and the Lord revengeth. He will punish sin wherever he finds it. He hates the sins of his own people as much as those of the children of the wicked one.

3. Divine wisdom appears in thus forcing a man to read his sin in his punishment. It appears to be a method well adapted to strike the conscience. It places the sin in a glaring tremendous light. It awakens all the keenest feelings of the soul in a manner which perhaps no other way could effect. "We read of a father, who being dragged about the streets by his son, he bid his son stop at a certain door, that being the very place unto which he had formerly dragged his father." *Bp. Kidder's sermons, p. 72. See also Flavel on Providence, p. 50. edit.* 1801.

4. Let sinners hear and fear, and do no more so wickedly, lest God should execute this law of retaliation in a dreadful manner. *Because I have called and ye refused—then shall they call upon me,*

*but I will not answer. Prov.* i. 24. 31. *Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.* 2 *Cor.* vi. 2. But if now by your conduct you say *Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways,* Christ will, according to this law, say in his turn, *Depart from me ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. Job* xxi. 14. *Matt.* xxx. 41.

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### ON LOW SPIRITS.

It has been frequently observed, that nervous complaints are much more prevalent now than formerly in England. Increasing wealth, as multiplying the artificial gratifications of life, and deducting from the necessity of corporeal exertion, may be assigned as the general occasion of this unfavourable change; but to see how this universal cause operates in particular cases, and may be most effectually counteracted, are the objects of the present essay.

Low spirits originate in the body, in the mind, or in both. That a weak relaxed habit of body is a source of frequent and painful depressions to some, is too evident to require formal proof. They inherit, from their parents, an enfeebled constitution, susceptible of every impression from external changes. Not the mountain oak, but the trembling aspin is emblematic of their feelings and frame: but imprudent or vicious indulgence will produce similar effects with constitutional debility. Indolence enervates the whole mass, especially when accompanied with the unrestrained gratification of a plentiful table. He who will doze away ten or more hours upon his bed, confine himself in a warm room through the greater part of his short day, and pamper an appetite unused to restraint, must expect an impost levied on his animal spirits, far more rigorous and grinding than all the taxes of the nation together.

Low spirits are sometimes occasioned by the state and feelings of the mind. The frequent recurrence of violent passions; thoughts overstrained with needless anxieties and worldly cares; dwelling too long and too minutely on the dark side of divine dispensations, regardless of the all-comprehending wisdom and infinite compassions of God; the conscience burdened with the guilt of wilful sin,—sin condemned by the judgment, but cherished in the heart; superstitious misconceptions of the character and requirements of

our Maker, Governor, and Judge; fears of approaching death, succeeding judgment, and eternal torments: these, each, or all of these, may prove the fruitful sources of painful and inexpressible depression.

Both body and mind may contribute largely to the effect now described. Their impressions are mutual: they act and reaact on each other; and, in many cases, it may be impossible exactly to ascertain the proportion of their respective influence.

Now, there are many false methods of cure for low spirits: methods which invariably aggravate the disease, or induce another, more alarmingly dangerous. These operate as opiates, whose favourable influence is momentary, but whose abiding effects are pernicious. They are like Job's friends, physicians of no value; and, under their regimen, the drooping patient grows worse and worse. Such are,

1. Gay companions. These are adepts in banishing from their giddy circle every thing like serious religion. God is not in all their thoughts, nor his venerable name upon their tongues, unless under the ebullitions of passion, the flippancy of wit, or the vacancy of rational discourse. The faces of these triflers affect a perpetual, but, in reality, a hollow smile. Themselves the subjects of chagrin and vanity, how can they administer relief to the mind torn with anxiety and sinking in dismay? Alas! miserable comforters are they all; and unhappy is that soul that seeks a cure in their society!

2. Some fly to fashionable amusements to relieve their care. The card-table, the assembly-room, or the theatre are pleaded for, and recommended as the most rational and innocent expedient to recreate the drooping spirits, and chace away the melancholy of the soul. These are indeed admirably calculated to kill time, and to carry away the mind to the remotest distance from every thing serious; but what is there in the transient pleasures of sin that is able to yie'd solid enjoyment? Or how can those lying vanities afford living satisfaction, over which we see the finger of God inscribe 'The end of these things is death?'

3. Others seek ease under the anxieties of life, by a method still more fatal than those already mentioned,—by resorting to the use of ardent spirits and cordials. These are first taken under the specious name of *necessary medicines*. They are repeated in small quantities, from time to time, till they are relished; and consider-

ed by the deluded party as wholesome and necessary. For a season, these murderous extracts procure a suspension of the more urgent symptoms; but the truce is short and deceitful: they return with redoubled force, and demanding larger supplies. The glass of mixture is superseded by the simple dram, and the hard drinker is formed. The wheels of the vital machine are fired, and the infatuated suicide drops into the grave and hell.*

But if these methods of relief are as preposterous as seeking the living among the dead, where then is the more excellent way?

Does lowness of spirits arise from the body? The remedies are plain and simple, viz.

1. Early rising. The good effects of morning air on the animal feelings are incalculable. It braces the nerves, cools the blood, promotes the secretions, and exhilirates the whole frame. Those who take light suppers, retire early to rest, and rise with the dawn, seldom complain of oppressive languor through the day.

2. Plain nourishing food. The arts of cookery are far from being friendly to the substantial enjoyments of man. Highly-seasoned meats, rich sauces, and artificial preparations for the table, may gratify the fastidious palate; but must be avoided by those who prefer the luxury of good spirits to the pleasures of relishing viands.

3. Exercise in the open air. This remedy is easy of attainment to most persons; and can never be neglected with impunity by those whose case we are now considering. The former part of the day is always to be preferred for this salutary engagement; but every suitable opportunity should be embraced with avidity for this purpose, by those who wish to secure themselves from nervous depressions.

Does the malady originate more immediately in the mind? The adapted means of relief are,

1. The company of cheerful and intelligent christians. The cheerfulness of such persons is the result of friendship with God, and a serene and well-ordered mind. Their conversation will lead away the imagination from discouraging and gloomy scenes, and

* An eminent minister of the gospel, remarkable for his strong and nervous expressions, once called spirituous liquors *distilled death! liquid damnation!* Ed.

prove a powerful and pleasing stimulus to those exertions of thought, which invigorate the faculties of the soul, as athletic exercises do the corporeal powers.

2. Study the word of God.

> 'Retire and read the bible to be gay:
> There truths abound of sov'reign aid to peace!'

This precious book discovers the true origin of every pain and fear that infests the body or the mind of man; declaring, that he is a sufferer, because a sinner. Here is revealed the divinely provided and sovereign catholicon for human miseries,—the glorious redemption of the Son of God. All, however unworthy, are invited to a participation of the saving health of the Mediator. The promises ascertain the success of every believing application for mercy; for 'Him that cometh,' saith the Friend of sinners, 'I will in no wise cast out.' An intimate acquaintance with the volume of heaven, guards the mind against superstitious scruples, and a repulsive dread of the Most High, by leading us to,

3. Contemplate the amiable character of God. In the person of Immanuel, he comes down to us; and, through Jesus, we draw near to his throne of grace. Here we learn, with the brightest evidence, that 'God is Love.' He lays aside the thunders of his vengeance, and extends the sceptre of his grace. All his perfections combine to encourage our hope, to refresh and establish our hearts in the assurance of his favour. He delights in the relation and conduct of a Parent; informing his feeble and afflicted people, that 'as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him: he knoweth our frame: he remembereth that we are dust.'

4. Cut off the injurious right hand, pluck out the offending right eye. One sin connived at, or partially indulged, will burden an enlightened conscience, depress the spirits, and fill the whole soul with weakness, alarm, and dismay. Till sin, every sin, be heartily abhorred and renounced as an abomination, conscience will never attest a person's safety or sincerity before God. Happy is the man who condemneth not himself in that thing, the practice of which he alloweth; but, by a cheerful discharge of every known duty, and the crucifixion of every known sin, labours to approve himself unto God as a sincere believer on the Lord Jesus, and to maintain a conscience void of wilful offence towards God and man

5. Pour out your hearts in repeated, fervent, believing prayer. To have an almighty Friend, in whom we may confide; an all-wise Counsellor, to whose direction we may resign ourselves and our affairs, is surely a privilege of supreme importance, amidst the inevitable sorrows of life, or the dark and trying dispensations of God. 'Call upon me in the day of trouble,' is the divine command, 'and I will deliver thee,' is the cheering promise. 'Ye have not, because ye ask not. Ask and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.' If half that time were spent in supplications to the God of all comfort, that is employed in fruitless complainings to fellow-worms, the glooms would soon be dispersed, and the morning of gladness shine around your footsteps!

6. Give all diligence to make your calling and election sure. What can furnish so effectual an antidote to the sorrows of time, as the humble assurance that your *all* is safe for eternity? Daily have recourse to the compassionate Redeemer for the application of his atonement, that your consciences may be purged from guilt, and enjoy peace with God. Look to Jesus for the promised Comforter, by whose agency the love of a reconciled God is shed abroad, and maintained in the heart. Walk humbly with God, as believing, loving, obedient Enoch walked; then shall you be elevated above yourselves and all your trials, anticipating the enjoyment of those serene regions, where sorrow and sighing shall flee away!

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## ON THE INFLUENCE OF THE SCRIPTURES IN PROMOTING THE SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF GOD.

Extracted from a sermon of the Rev. James Peddie, preached before the London Missionary Society, in May, 1809.

THE *first* of these means for making the name of Christ to be remembered in all generations, is *the volume of holy scripture*. This volume, the most precious remnant of antiquity, comes recommended to our veneration and love by two considerations—the authority to which it lays claim, and the subject of which it treats. Its words are "the oracles of God," which "holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost;" and its great subject is Jesus Christ. His name is the golden thread which runs throughout the web of scripture, connecting the several parts in-

separably together; and giving beauty, consistence, and inestimable value, to the whole. From the promise made in Paradise, to the revelations given in Patmos, "Christ is all, and in all;" the substance of the law, the theme of prophecy, and the sum of the gospel. Though in every portion of scripture his name is not equally conspicuous, nor the peculiar truths of his gospel found in equal abundance, yet he must be blind indeed who cannot discover the relation, more or less remote, of all to Jesus Christ, and dull indeed, who cannot learn something, from Moses as well as from Paul, concerning those truths which constitute the perfection, the glory, of his character, and form the solid foundation of our confidence and hope. The book of God constitutes one great whole, the different parts of which have one common object and aim; the one supplying what is deficient, and illustrating what is obscure, in the other. Let us particularly value the latter part of the blessed volume, without which we could but grope at the meaning of the former, which is the peculiar treasure of the christian church, and exhibits the glory of Jesus' name and doctrine in every page; but let us not despise or neglect the old testament, which speaks with the same authority, treats of the same Saviour, and reflects on the pious reader the light shed on it by the new. When we judiciously combine the figures of the law and the raptures of the prophets with the facts of the evangelists and the reasonings of Paul, what a noble structure of evangelical truth rises on our enraptured view; solid, sublime heavenly, pure; built entirely of celestial materials; and every stone in the building emblazoned with the name of Jesus Christ in letters of purest gold!

It has been chiefly by means of this volume that the name of Christ has been preserved to the present times. True religion will be found to have prospered or declined as men have enjoyed the facility of procuring, the capacity of perusing, and the liberty of consulting at pleasure, this sacred volume. Is it any matter of surprise that religion almost disappeared from the earth, when the book of God was locked up in libraries, to be covered with dust, or consumed by vermin; when few could purchase, and fewer read it; when permission to have a copy in the vulgar language had previously to be obtained from a superstitious and jealous clergy; and when to ask it excited suspicion, and exposed to danger of liberty and life? Or what else might have been expected, than that the great revival of religion at the reformation, should immediately fol-

low the multiplication of copies of the scriptures, and the translation of them into the living languages of Europe? At this day, one may form a pretty accurate estimate of the state of religion in any particular district, by the scarcity or abundance of bibles in the place. I require nothing more to satisfy me that religion was at a very low ebb in the earlier part of the reign of Josiah, than the knowledge of the fact, that Hilkiah, the priest, having found a book of the law of the Lord in a corner of the temple, presented it to Shaphan, the scribe, as a curiosity; and that the king, when it was read before him, was alarmed at its contents as at something new and strange. Nor is there, perhaps, any more striking proof of the low state of religion on the continent immediately before the reformation, than the circumstance, that scarcely a copy of the Greek new testament could be found in all Germany besides those in possession of Erasmus; that his utmost diligence could not procure a complete copy from which to translate; and that, when he first published his translation, he was seriously accused by many ecclesiastics with having forged the book as a means of injuring their order.

Why should we despair of the cause of Christ, as long as the bible exists, and copies of it can be procured? The importance of this blessed book has in all ages been acknowledged by the enemies, and felt by the friends, of the truth. In ancient times, the heathen persecutors of the church saw that their efforts to extirpate christianity would be fruitless, as long as it existed. They laid the ax, therefore, to the root of the tree, in order to fetch a deadly stroke, by persecuting the scriptures. Private houses were searched, in quest of this proscribed book, and liberal rewards offered for its voluntary surrender. The traditors, as they were styled, obtained their lives in exchange for the copy, or part of a copy, which they committed to the flames; and such was the success of Julian, in particular, the most malignant and active of its enemies, that he vainly hoped to survive the bible, and the name of Christ. In modern times the bible is persecuted, but in a different manner. It has seldom, of late, except by a few madmen, within our own recollection, been committed to the flames. It has more commonly been attacked by the keenest shafts of ridicule, and the basest arts of misrepresentation; its authenticity questioned, its inspiration denied, its meaning perverted, and its doctrines abused. But the more it has been persecuted, the more it has been venerated and cherished by the lovers of Christ's name. In former times,

many cheerfully surrendered their lives rather than seem to insult it; and genuine christians still rally around the standard of scripture, to protect it from every hostile assault, determined never to abandon it, to hold it fast as their hope in their dying grasp, and, when they must quit their hold, to deliver it to their neighbours and their offspring as a sacred trust, and their dearest possession.

In times when superstition usurped the place of true religion, and scriptural faith could scarcely be found on earth, the scriptures were one principal means of preventing the truth from utterly expiring. Read in secret, when there was "no open vision," they served "as a light shining in a dark place," "to give knowledge of salvation to" the remnant of God's people, and "to guide their feet in the way of peace;" and I doubt not that in many parts of the world, and of our own country, where persons are far from the ordinances of God, or where another gospel is preached, the perusal of the holy scriptures in private families is subservient to the production and the preservation of the life of God in many souls. Even where the public dispensation of the gospel is enjoyed, religion can scarcely be supposed to spread far, or last long, if men are unable to procure, or cannot read, the scriptures. Consistent views of the truth must with difficulty be acquired, and with greater difficulty retained. The memory is so treacherous, and the heart so deceitful, that impressions made under occasional hearing of the gospel must soon be effaced, if they are not retouched and deepened by the frequent perusal of the word. On this account, I consider the circulation of the scriptures as of immense consequence to the spread of the gospel, and despair of lasting success to any mission, however promising first appearances may be, till the scriptures are put into the hands of the people, and they are taught to read them.

The scriptures are now, humanly speaking, beyond the reach of all their adversaries. They can never run such risks as they have survived. By the pious labours of men, they have been translated into so many languages; by the art of printing, copies have been with such facility and so exceedingly multiplied; and by the spirit of holy zeal, they have been so widely dispersed over the surface of the earth; that they are safe from every tyrant's grasp, and every deist's pen. The calamities of individual nations, and the ruin of particular churches, can have but a very partial and temporary effect. When the bible was naturalized, if I may so speak, in fewer

countries, spoke to men in fewer languages, and was in incomparably fewer hands, it survived the fall of kingdoms, the ruin of churches, many great revolutions and grievous calamities of mankind; and much more may it be now expected to survive every future convulsion of the earth.

Nor is this matter of mere probability; it is matter of certainty and faith. Jehovah lives, and is "wise in heart, and mighty in strength." He will not withdraw his protection from this blessed book, which his Spirit inspired, which his providence has for so many ages guarded, which is the solace of them that fear him, the authentic standard of true religion, and the great monument of the Redeemer's fame. "The word of the Lord endureth for ever; and this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you." And while it endures, the name and religion of Jesus will endure. When the bones of its enemies have been resolved into dust, and their names have perished from the memory of man, the name of Christ will shine in holy scripture with the purest light of heaven, and by the glory of its radiance illuminate, beautify, and delight every soul that by faith beholds it. Through this book, God will make the name of his dear Son "to be remembered in all generations; and the people shall praise him for ever and ever."

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### SINGULAR INTRODUCTION TO A SERMON.

In the year 1764, an aged minister was preaching in Philadelphia, from Romans 7. 11. He thus introduced his discourse:

"Some of you, I suppose, are acquainted with the writings of the late Dr. Cotton Mather, of Boston; particularly his Wonders of the Invisible World. If so, you remember a story he there tells (as a matter of uncontested truth) of one Beacon, who was murdered in London, the 2d of May, in the year 1687. This person, the morning following, appeared to his brother Joseph Beacon, in Boston, and told him he was murdered, and in what manner; and also how he should avenge his death."—

"This story and a thousand others of a like sort have been told with strong indications of credibility. But perhaps you doubt concerning them. Be it so. Yet you have, to-day, heard of a person who appeared alive to tell his own story after he had been treacherously slain. He told you the name of the murderer; the occasion;

and how he deceived him: and he did all this to apprise you of the danger *you* are in from the same adversary: and this tale every one of you believed."—

—"Methinks you are in suspense as if you had heard no such tale to-day. Well then, I will repeat it again—*Sin taking occasion by the commandment deceived me and by it slew me.*"

In the course of the sermon, the preacher added,

"If any one came here to-night in sin, the bloody murderer stepped in with him at that door and is now amongst us. Should we then wonder if the cry of murder were to fill the house, and that the consternation were as great as it was in the dead of the night last week when rappings were heard at your doors with the cry *an enemy is coming?* The sound of the martial drum beat to arms in our streets, and the alarm of those dreadful bells frightened the town, and the time of soft repose fled away."

"Wilt thou, O sinner, keep thy sin to-day? Wilt thou entertain it till the morrow? That were to take a deceiver home with thee to thy house; that were to lodge to-night with a murderer. Wilt thou henceforth make provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof? That were, like Julius Cesar, to provide for and cherish (a Brutus) an assassin."

"And, ye saints, will you have to do any more with sin? Some say that a corpse will bleed when the murderer toucheth it: and will not your souls bleed afresh when sin toucheth them?"

"Surely mankind do not consider sin as the text represents it, else they would run from it as from the manslayer, and shun and abhor it as they do a murderous ruffian."

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ORIGINAL LETTER OF THE LATE REV. GEORGE WHITFIELD,

To —— ——, Esq. written in the 24th year of his age, the third after he began to preach in the fields, and the year before he was excluded the church, for having more religion than his brethren.

Tullow Bridge, Nov. 20, 1738.

Dear Sir,

THOUGH I know you not by name, yet as you were so kind as to come and fetch me to your house, and Providence called me so soon away; I think a line will not be unacceptable. But what shall

I say, dear Sir? why I thank you with all my soul, for your great kindness, and heartily beseech God it may not lose its reward. But dear Sir, give me leave to chide you, for you and many others think more highly of me than you ought to think, for alas! I am nothing, have nothing, and can do nothing without God. What although I may, like a polished sepulchre appear a litttle beautiful without, yet within I am full of pride, selflove, and all manner of corruption. However, by the grace of God I am what I am; and if it should please God to make me instrumental to do the least good, not unto me, but unto him, be all the glory.

So poor, so frail an instrument
If thou, my God, vouchsafe to use,
It's praise enough to be employ'd,
Reward enough, if thou excuse.
If thou excuse, then work thy will
By so unfit an instrument,
It will at once thy goodness show,
And prove thy power omnipotent.

Oh! dear Sir, my heart is so full of a sense of the divine goodness, that I could wish that I could persuade all men to love God; for however this or that pleasure or profit may promise, yet God alone can procure true happiness to the soul. Therefore, dear Sir, make God the alpha and omega, the beginning and end of all your actions. Study to know him more and more, for the more you know, the more you will love him. Study to know him as he has revealed himself in Christ Jesus, and labour every day to copy after that exemplar. In short, renounce the world in affection, deny yourself and give your heart to God, and he in return will give you himself.

Oh! that this may be the practice of, dear Sir,

Your most obliged humble servant,

GEORGE WHITFIELD.

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*From the Evangelical Magazine.*

### AN AWFUL PROVIDENCE.

H—— A——, a butcher in the neighbourhood of Smithfield, who was, for some years, proverbially wicked, and a determined, open enemy to divine revelation, returning home one day in the

month of September last, somewhat intoxicated, began first to abuse his wife, and then the bible. At length, he went out into the court into which he lived; and, falling down upon his knees, prayed in the most shocking manner against the scriptures. He proceeded to curse God and Christ, and the Holy Ghost; and wished that his eyes might be damned and drop out! when, awful to relate! he became immediately blind! His eyes were prodigiously swelled, and his whole frame was seized with a kind of convulsions! In this state he continued from Friday until the Tuesday following, when he died, blaspheming and cursing God. While he lay in this state, a serious neighbour visited him, and proposed sending for a minister; to which he objected, saying, 'No, no, you shall not; for I am the Devil's right, and shall soon be with him!'

Reader, are you in the habit of blaspheming that venerable name, at which angels bow and devils tremble? beware, lest he make you, even in this world, a monument of his terrible displeasure, and cause you to lament your folly in that world from whence there is no return! As you value your immortal soul, let this narrative warn you to fly from the wrath to come, to that Saviour whose precious blood cleanses from all sin.

The Editor of the Evangelical Magazine, judging that this narrative was of a very extraordinary kind, requested that further inquiry might be made concerning its truth. In consequence of which, he received the following note:

"Sir, At your request, I have made further inquiry concerning the inclosed anecdote; and find it to be fully attested by indubitable evidence. A providence so awful, should not be suffered to remain unknown, as it proves to us, that there is a God who still takes cognizance of the actions of men! Yours, &c.

"*Brixton Place, April* 12, 1809. THOMAS JACKSON."

## ANECDOTES.

THE Empress Eleanora de Gonzaga, wife of Leopold, instituted, in 1668, an order for ladies, called *the order of the starry cross*. The ensign of the order is a medal of gold chased and pierced; in the centre is the imperial eagle, and over all a cross with a motto "*Salus et Gloria*."—"*Salvation* and *Glory*." It was quite unnecessary to establish an *order* with a motto like this: for

the cross shall prove the means of SALVATION and GLORY to ALL who believe in the name of Jesus.

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How different the philosophy of the world from the spirit of the gospel! Some of the greatest men among the heathen, with all their boast of superiority of character, to avoid the dishonour, which they dreaded from their fellow creatures, sought refuge in suicide. When Cordus Aulus Cremutius, a senator and historian of Rome, foresaw that he should be condemned by the tribunal appointed to hear his cause, he resolved to put an end to his existence by an entire abstinence from food. Becoming so exhausted by hunger and debility as to apprehend a speedy removal, he sent for Marcia, his beloved daughter, and, having apologized for having concealed from her the secret of his purpose, he added, "I am now half way on the road, and you neither ought to keep me back nor can do it." We say, how different the spirit of the gospel! *Where shall the injured christian be found who sought refuge from scaffolds and burnings by* SELF-MURDER?

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A high mountain in Asia Minor is called, by Xenophon, Coresus. It is said, the name was derived from the following fable: Diana having conducted Latona into these parts, asked of the country people, whose mountain that was. They answered "Κορη σος" (Kore sos), Damsel, it is yours! What are things present and things to come but the Coresus of every believer? "All things are yours."

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THE following instance of disinterested benevolence deserves to be universally known, especially as it has contributed to the virtuous education of some thousands of children, the poverty or negligence of whose parents might have destined their passing through life in ignorance and vice.

"In the year 1556, Thomas Wheatly, who was then mayor of the city of Coventry, in England, and who followed the trade of an iron monger and card maker, sent a servant to Spain to procure some barrels of steel gads. By an unaccountable mistake he brought home a number of casks filled with ingots of silver and cochineal, which had been offered for sale, in an open market, as the articles alluded to, and purchased as such. This worthy man tried every

means, but without effect, to discover the person who had sold them. At length he resolved on endowing an hospital, which fifty years before had been founded in that city by Thomas Bond. From forty to sixty children continue, from the charity, to receive, each, for the period of four years, good clothing, board, and tuition.

THE only reply made by Cyprian, when, on refusing to sacrifice to heathen gods, at the command of Galerius, the proconsul, he was informed that he was sentenced to be beheaded, was *God be thanked.*

## RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

*Washington* (P.), *October* 3, 1809.

ESTEEMED FRIEND,

WHEN the news of a Bible Society in Philadelphia reached this corner of the vineyard, it occasioned praise and prayers, which yet continue. A number desired an opportunity of aiding its funds. On consultation, we made a little box, with a hole in the lid, which we called the Bible box, with this inscription, O HELP ME TO A BIBLE, and informed the congregation that this should stand in the church three months, then be opened, and the contents sent to the Bible Society.

I have with pleasure frequently seen little children come with their small donations and slip them in, much moved with the intelligence of any families having no bible. According to appointment we opened it yesterday, and found thirty-two dollars and fifty cents, a check for which I inclose.

I am apprehensive that if every minister, friendly to the institution, would take this simple inoffensive method of giving an opportunity to each one of his charge to cast in his mite, something considerable might be done for the glory of God and the good of his church. I am of opinion that if the evangelical society would deposit a number of their small tracts in some bookstore in Pittsburgh, they would be bought and distributed gratis. Would you please to hint this to some of the members.

Esteemed friend,

Yours respectfully,

ROBERT RALSTON, Esq. JOSEPH PATTERSON.

## INTERESTING EXTRACTS FROM THE LAST REPORT OF THE BAPTIST MISSION SOCIETY.

A *sketch of the life of a Hindoo idolater*, exemplified in the story of Futtick, a converted native, whose sister Bhanee lately died rejoicing in the Lord Jesus.

" Bhanee was born at a village named Mujgooree, in the district of Jessore, in Bengal. Her father died when she was very young. He was a weaver, and a strict idolater. He used to pray to the gods to give him a son; but before the birth of his son Futtick, he had two daughters, of whom Bhanee was the second. At the age of eight years, Bhanee was married to a weaver of the name of Ramakonta, by whom she had five children, two of whom now work in the printing office at Serampore: another is dead, and two daughters are married."

" After the death of her husband, Bhanee came and lived with Futtick and her mother. At this time Futtick disregarded the cast in secret, and, under the idea of cultivating universal love, used to eat with all other casts who were of the same mind. Still, however, he used to worship Kreeshno, under the name of Huree. His mother received what is called an initiatory muntra* from a brahman as her gooroo; but another brahman came to Futtick's house, and constrained Futtick to take a muntra from him, contrary to the advice of his mother, who wished her son to receive the same spiritual teacher as herself. The words of this muntra, which indeed Futtick never understood, were, *Ungu Kilingu ungu shwuda ungu suvitru mundule.* Some time after this, his mother's gooroo came to the house, and flew into a dreadful passion because Futtick had received the initiatory muntra from another gooroo. The whole family threw themselves at his feet to appease him, and Futtick ran and hid himself. Nothing could pacify the enraged gooroo till Futtick came, and threw himself at his feet, and promised to receive the muntra from him. Futtick now took a second guardian deity, and a second gooroo, or spiritual teacher. After the gooroo was thus pacified, he rose and ate with them.

" These efforts to get disciples arise from the poverty of the gooroo, whose means of subsistence depend upon the number of his disciples, at each of whose houses he stays for a day or two at a time, taking with him a present according to the ability of the

* This muntra is repeated in silence, as a sure means of salvation.

disciple. After this a woman gave Futtick another muntra to repeat, and he became her disciple. This muntra consisted of certain words addressed to the earth, sun, air, and water. Futtick was next drawn among the Ghosparowites,* and took another muntra, called the soloanna or perfect muntra, for which he gave a rupee. The words of this muntra are, *Kurta aooliya muha prubhoo, amee tomaru sookhe chulee phiree, lilarddha amee tomaru charanaee; amee tomaru sunge achee; dohaee muha prubhoo;* viz. O sinless Lord, O great Lord; at thy pleasure I go and return; not a moment am I without thee. I am ever with thee; save, O great Lord. The person who gave this muntra told Futtick that by it he would be able to cure the most dreadful diseases, &c.

"In this way poor Futtick was carried away by different deceivers, finding nothing on which he could rest for salvation, and getting daily proofs that all these people were only seeking their own profit by teaching lies; and while they pretended to teach others the way to heaven, were themselves in the high road to destruction.

"Futtick says, he has attended meetings of those who worship what are called the Suktee debtahs, at which meetings men and women secretly set up a woman as an object of worship, before whom a pan of liquor is placed, and a number of ceremonies performed. At length the persons present, both male and female, drink off a pot of spirits, each man becoming a Sheeva, and each woman a Doorga, and conclude the meeting with indecencies which delicacy forbids to be mentioned.

"He has also attended meetings of persons of different casts, followers of the god Kreeshno, when the worshippers, at the close of the ceremony, eat together, mix in play indiscriminately, the men becoming Kreshnos and the women Radhas, (the name of Kreeshno's principal mistress) and commit every abomination."

## MURDER.

"There died lately at Cutwa, a Hindoo, who left behind him a young widow. Her father was a pundit, and esteemed to be a very holy man. The young widow said, at the time of her husband's death, that she would burn with him. But when the time

* Followers of a man named Ram doolol.

came, and the funeral pile was lighted, she revolted, and struggled to get out of the flames. The father perceiving this, called to the people who stood by with bamboos in their hands *to beat her back*. With these bamboos they stir the fire, beat the extremities of the body, cleave the skull, &c. They instantly obeyed, and literally beat out her brains while she was endeavouring to escape!*

*Extract of a letter from Sabat, mentioned in 'the Star in the East,' to Mr. Marshman.*

"I have no other news to write thee than this: I am the very sinner against the Lord, and I hope that thou never wilt forget me in thy prayers, thou and Mr. Carey, Mr. Ward, and all those that are in the service of the Lord Jesus Christ. The mercy of our Redeemer, the only-begotten Son of God, and of the Father Almighty, be with you and your church, now and for ever. Amen.

NAT. SABAT."

CARE IN THE TRANSLATION.

*Extract of a letter from Mr. Carey.*

Serampore, April 20th, 1808.

"You mention some objections that have been made to our translations, as if they were the work of graceless brahmans. We certainly do employ all the helps we can obtain; brahmans, musselmans, and others, who both translate, and sometimes write out rough copies, and should think it criminal not to do so. But we never *print* any translation, till every word has been revised, and re-revised. Whatever helps we employ, I have never yet suffered a single word, or a single mode of construction to pass without examining it, and seeing through it. I read every proof-sheet twice or thrice myself, and correct every letter with my own hand. Brother Marshman and I compare with the Greek or Hebrew, and brother Ward reads every sheet. Three of the translations, viz. the Bengalee, Hindostanee, and Sungskrit, I

* The following is an extract of a letter from Dr Carey. "A few weeks ago I visited the most learned Hindoo now living. He speaks only Sungskrit, is more than eighty years old, is acquainted with the writings, and has studied the sentiments of all their schools of philosophy, commonly called the Durshumas of the Veda. This man has given his opinion against the burning of women."

translate with my own hand; the two last immediately from the Greek, and the Hebrew bible is before me while I translate the Bengalee. Whatever helps I use, I commit my judgment to none of them. Brother Marshman does the same with the Chinese, and all that he engages in, and so does brother Ward.

The idea that a translation made* by a brahman will be unintelligible to the mass of the people, is unfounded. Would you, if you were translating the bible into English, despise the grammatical language and assistance of learned men; and make use of the dialect and orthography of the illiterate? And if you did, would it be better understood than the present English translation, which was the work of learned men? I feel my ground in all the languages derived from the Sungskrit; but perhaps may not have perfectly understood every passage, nor have always expressed the meaning in the happiest terms. Some mistakes also may have escaped my observation. Indeed I have never yet thought any thing perfect that I have done. I have no scruple however in saying that I believe every translation that we have printed to be a good one.

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THE following article is taken from *The Oriental Star*, a Calcutta newspaper, of Jan. 23, 1808, which shows, says Dr. Carey, the necessity of the gospel in the Burman dominions.

"An English gentleman recently arrived from Rangoon, relates as follows:

"The viceroy of Rangoon (whose son's head had been cut off at Ava for chewing opium) had upon his arrival at the latter place, just before he landed, drawn his sword on board a boat, and thrown the scabbard into the river. His attendants remarking this extraordinary act, asked him the cause of it. His reply was, 'My sword shall never be sheathed, till it has revenged the death of my son!'

"A man for chewing opium was put to death by crucifixion, in which red hot nails were used: in this position his belly was ript up, and in that horrid situation he was left to expire! His entrails lying at his feet were immediately devoured by crows and vultures, several hours before the unhappy man ceased to breathe, and of which he seemed to be sensible!

* That is, first drawn out. Ed.

"Another unhappy wretch, for getting drunk, had hot lead poured down his throat in small quantities of about half a glassfull: the two first caused a strong smoke to issue from his mouth, of which he was apparently sensible; but the third dose put an instant period to his existence. Another culprit, for a similar crime, was sentenced to be roasted alive, which execution was to take place a few days subsequent to our narrator's departure from Rangoon. Two others, one who had run away from the Burman army, and one whose father had done the same (but had not been taken) had their legs cut off above their knees, were also nailed up by their hands with red hot nails, and the hair of their heads tied fast up to a pole: thus situated, they were left to bleed to death. These miserable wretches remained alive for some hours, during which their piercing cries were distressing beyond expression. Not an inhabitant in the place had any rest the whole night in consequence. The wives and children of the last unhappy sufferers were to be blown up in three days afterwards!

"We understand that the viceroy who ordered these unparalleled torments, had, during a long administration, executed the duties of his office with the greatest mildness and benevolence, screening many offenders from the rigour of the barbarous law of their country: but the execution of his son by the court of Ava had driven him to the highest pitch of desperation, and caused him to vow that the bloody criminal code of his country should be enforced to the utmost extremity."

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REMARKS ON THE VELLORE MUTINY.

"It is curious enough to observe the conduct of those who deprecate the idea of alarming the natives with any appearance of design to extend christianity. They themselves have done more in one hour to excite alarm among the natives than all the missionaries in India have done from Zeegenbaly's arrival to this time, or perhaps may do for a hundred years to come. Let me solve this problem. The Hindoos are not so much afraid of *becoming* christians as of being *made* christians; of embracing a doctrine when previous and ample examination has convinced them of its truth, as of being *compelled* to embrace it while they, through ignorance, hold it in abhorrence. Discussion, especially of a religious nature, is familiar with the Hindoos; it agrees

with their taste, and the country is almost full of it. Among the various sects of the brahmans it is carried to a surprising extent, and it has been thus for many centuries. I have heard it also mentioned as one cause of the detestation in which the Hindoos have always held the Mahometan governments in India, that they were constantly hostile to religious discussion, which I believe is a strong feature in all Mahometan governments. This freedom of discussion renders it perfectly safe to propose any doctrine, or agitate any question of a religious nature. Are their prejudices attacked; opinions, held sacred for ages, called in question; or even the fundamental principles of their religion opposed? A Hindoo feels no kind of alarm: he even enjoys the confusion of his teacher, when pressed with powerful arguments, and sometimes unites in the ridicule which is poured upon him. Why is this? Because the reception of these new principles is a matter of perfect option: they are questions proposed for discussion, not commands which must be obeyed, however repugnant to the feelings and the judgment. Hence they are examined with pleasure, because they can be rejected without incurring the displeasure of their rulers. Not so under the Mahometan governments, and hence the dislike already mentioned. Of the truth of these ideas, the most abundant proof has been furnished. Whence has it arisen that the preaching of the gospel for nearly fourteen years in Bengal, the distribution of many thousands of tracts, and several thousand copies of the new testament, and above all, the baptism of more than a hundred of the natives—Kaystas, Brahmans, and Mahometans—have never occasioned the least appearance of tumult, or sensation of alarm? Nay, more: to what can it be ascribed that the labours of those zealous and able missionaries, Zeegenbaly and his successors, and particularly the fervent, the apostolic labours of the venerable Swartz, for nearly half a century, caused no sensation of alarm even in a country situated in the vicinity of powerful princes, both Hindoo and Mahometan; the latter of whom, Hyder and Tippoo, for a great part of the time in a state of actual hostility, and of course ready to ferment the least appearance of discontent? Even to this, they only *persuaded* men; nothing of a compulsory nature was added to excite fear, and create alarm; and no alarm was excited, even at Vellore, by these means, although the gospel has been preached there and in its neighbourhood *more than forty years*.

" But the issuing a command to obliterate, while on duty, all marks of cast was a measure of a totally different complexion, of which a moderate acquaintance with the real state and feelings of the natives must convince any one. I have heard of a missionary who attempted, partly by authority and partly by ridicule, to obliterate those marks on the face of his hearers. We however never attempted to prevent their wearing them, though we have remonstrated and continue to remonstrate with them in an affectionate manner on the evil of idolatry, of which this is a badge; but we have never prohibited their appearing with it. Had we done thus, we should probably have had no servants, nor have left the least impression on their minds favourable to the gospel. Their judgment remaining unconvinced, they would still have considered these marks as sacred badges, and conceived of us as unjust and unreasonable men.

" The case of the soldiers, however, differed even from this. It might be, as Sir J. Craddock states, that the influence of Tippoo's family was the grand cause of that unhappy affair: but I am as fully convinced that a more favourable occasion of working on the minds of the Hindoo troops could scarcely have been furnished to the emissaries of that family. How easy was it for designing men to represent to these poor ignorant Hindoos, ' they have commanded you to efface all marks of cast while on duty; but what is this, but a prelude to compelling you altogether to obliterate them, nay, to renounce cast, and embrace the religion of *Esea*.' I do not say that this unhappy circumstance was thus fatally improved to the prejudice of their British masters; but it was what I should have expected, and that these Mahometans would also have urged the impossibility of disobeying every subsequent command of this nature, unless the first were resisted, which to men ignorant as these poor Hindoos must have been, and unable to evade the command without the crime of desertion, might have enraged them almost to madness.

" After this, however, to throw the blame on christianity, and in consequence raise a hue-and-cry against christian missionaries, and this after the experience of so many years, and the testimony of the Honourable Company, as well as of a number of its highest servants, civil and military, who had borne witness to the peaceable nature and tendency of their conduct, is so unreasonable, as well as

illiberal, that I cannot find a parallel instance in christian history; nor do I know of any thing similar, unless it were the conduct of that heathen emperor, who after setting fire to his capital, threw the odium on the christians.

" It is certainly true that very serious consequences arise from the retaining of cast in the military department. In addition to what this memoir mentions relative to a private of superior cast refusing to let his officer of inferior cast sit in his presence, we know that it is almost as painful as death itself to a Brahman, if he be required to obey the commands of a Soodra. Of this contempt of a soodra, an instance occurred last week. Nimmi Mullik, one of the richest Hindoos in India, died a few weeks since, and left an order for three lacks of rupees, nearly thirty-six thousand pounds, to be distributed at his sradda, or funeral feast. Brother Carey a day or two ago asked several of his pundits why they had not applied for a share, as application alone was necessary to insure success. They replied with apparent abhorrence, that they would not on any account touch a cowrie of the money; nay, the Khidmitgai joined in the sentiment. Would you know the reason why these Hindoos were so averse in this instance to touching money? Nimmi Mullik was a *soodra*, of the cast of goldsmiths, which happens to be a degree lower than that of the Khidmitgai! Cast is therefore a *remora* of the most serious kind to military subordination. It is however only *one* of the fruits of Hindooism; and if the tree must be so carefully nourished that even a breath of christian doctrine must not be suffered to approach it, lest it should prove noxious, it seems singular, and perhaps somewhat hard, that one of its principal branches should be lopped off at once, because in one instance the flavour of the fruit happens to be unpleasant. There are ways however of causing this branch to wither of itself, without the least alarm, and we have a number of instances now around us of the success of such a method. But if gentlemen who are disgusted with the fruit will not themselves take the pains to apply this effectual remedy, it seems rather extraordinary that they should wish to expel from India the very persons who would.

(To be continued.)

*From the Evangelical Magazine.*

MISSION TO THE JEWS.

Mr. Frey has voluntarily relinquished his connexion with the society, as their missionary to the Jews. We understand that, although the directors did not think proper to comply with some expensive proposals made to them by Mr. Frey, for the future management of this mission, they are, nevertheless, determined to pursue the original object by every method which appears to them scriptural and practicable.

Another stated preacher, instead of Mr. Frey, is provided for Artillery Street Chapel, who, in conjunction with various ministers, will preach to the Jews at that place, visit the sick, instruct the children, and distribute suitable tracts; some of which are in the press.

DRURY-LANE THEATRE.

It is but five months since we had to record the destruction of Covent Garden Theatre by fire. It is very remarkable that, in so short a space of time, the other principal theatre of the metropolis should be destroyed in a similar manner. On the evening of Friday, Feb. 24, 1809, about a quarter after eleven, the fire suddenly broke out at the end of the building in Brydges Street. The flames spread with a rapidity and violence not to be described; so that, in about half an hour, every part of this building, extending near 400 feet in length, was on fire; and before 12 o'clock, the lofty roof, and the figure of Apollo (17 feet in height) which surmounted the whole, fell in with a terrible crash.

In vain did a number of surrounding engines pour in a flood of water; the neighbouring houses were indeed preserved by the efforts of the firemen; but the vast body of fire within the walls, mocked all attempts to extinguish it, or even to lessen its force. The furious flames ascended to heaven in a kind of pyramid, illuminating the metropolis and its neigbourhood for many miles around in a most uncommon degree, and resembling rather the eruption of a burning mountain than the effect of a common fire. Indeed, the spectacle was awfully grand, especially when beheld from the bridges; and, in the judgment of perhaps a hundred thousand spectators, exceeded any thing ever remembered in this kingdom. The thick and lofty walls, being built partly with timber, gave way during the night, but fell in such a direction, as, we

believe, not to injure the firemen or others. Thus, in the small space of two hours, this vast edifice, which is said to have cost 200,000*l.* besides the scenery, machinery, wardrobe, &c. was reduced to a glowing heap of ruins!

In reflecting on this catastrophe, we cannot avoid calling to mind a circumstance respecting its erection in 1794. To expedite the work, the completion of which was so ardently desired by the lovers of pleasure, the managers scrupled not to set at open defiance the laws of God and the country. It is well remembered, that crowds of workmen were openly employed about the building, even to the annoyance of pious persons, who were passing that way to their respective places of worship. This nuisance was in vain complained of; but religious persons said, "This house can never prosper!"

Besides the evils ordinarily connected with a playhouse and its entertainments, there has been too much reason to complain of some recent performances, imported from the German school, injurious to good morals as well as to religion; and the indecencies allowed in the lobbies, have been often referred to in our newspapers and other prints, even by those who are advocates for theatrical amusements.

There is one circumstance which it would be unpardonable in us not to mention. We refer to those vain and presumptuous boasts which were uttered on the stage in the epilogue composed by Mr. Colman, and spoken by Miss Farren (now the countess of Derby) on the night of opening the new theatre.

'Our pile is rock, more durable than brass,—
Our decorations, gossamer and gas;
Weighty, yet airy in effect,—our plan
Solid, though light,—like a vain alderman:
'Blow wind, come wreck;' in ages yet unborn,
'Our castle's strength shall laugh a siege to scorn,'
The very ravages of fire we scout,
For we have wherewithal to put it out:
In ample reservoirs our firm reliance,
Whose streams set conflagration at defiance.
Panic alone avoid, let none begin it,—
Should the flame spread, sit still, there's nothing in it,
We'll undertake to drown you all in half a minute.

Behold, obedient to the prompter's bell,
Our tide shall flow, and real waters swell;—
No river of meandering pasteboard made;
No gentle tinkling of a tin cascade;
No brook of broadcloth shall be set in motion;
No ships be wreck'd upon a wooden ocean;
But the pure element its course shall hold,
Rush on the scene, and o'er the stage be roll'd.*
Consume the scenes, your safety still is certain,—
Presto,—for proof, let down the iron curtain.'†

This was truly heathenish language, appropriate indeed to the sort of people who vented and applauded it; but extremely contrary to that modesty which becomes dependent mortals, who, with all their boasted works, are "crushed before the moth." Presuming on the strength of their "castle," they defy the stormy winds, which, in spite of men, "fulfil the word of the Almighty;" and, "firmly relying" on their "AMPLE RESERVOIRS," they "*scout the ravages of fire.*" The late event, however, proves that all such boasting is vain, and the structure which was to entertain "ages yet unborn," was, after fifteen years only, reduced, in two hours, to a pile of smoking ruins!

The reservoir, it is said, had, on the morning of the fire, been emptied for the purpose of being stanched, and for which a fire had been lighted in a coffee room adjoining the reservoir; the reservoir being, therefore, in this state, could be of no use in stopping the conflagration. The iron curtain had been sometime since removed, from its being found incapable of being let down, from rust and other impediments.

The destruction of Drury Lane theatre reminds us of that of *Berlin*, a few months ago. On the first day of July, 1808, after several days of extreme heat, at 2 o'clock in the afternoon, a thick black cloud of smoke burst from one of the great squares, called the king's garden, which, in a few moments, totally darkened the

* The curtain was here drawn up, to show a piece of water on the stage, filled from the reservoir on the roof of the theatre. A bridge was thrown over the water with an arch, and a man rowed in a boat under the arch, while the music played "The jolly young Waterman."

† The iron curtain was afterwards dropped in joints, and the stage was completely separated from the audience. Several men then came forward with sledge hammers, and beat the curtain, to convince the audience that it was iron.

air, without it being possible for the people, who had collected in great numbers to imagine the cause; but, suddenly, violent flames burst from this cloud of smoke, and it appeared that the new theatre, which had no connexion with any other building, was entirely in flames. The fire raged with so much violence, and spread with such rapidity, that, in a quarter of an hour, the roof was wholly consumed and fell in. It was found totally impossible to extinguish the fire; and, at 4 p. m. the whole of that edifice was reduced to ashes.

The destruction of places of amusement in London, for some years past, is somewhat remarkable. The following account is borrowed from the public prints:

| | |
|---|---|
| Drury Lane playhouse built - - - | 1662 |
| Burnt down, 10 years after - - - | 1672 |
| Pulled down . - - - - | 1791 |
| Rebuilt - - - - - - | 1794 |
| Burnt down, 15 years after - - - | 1809 |
| Covent Garden, built - - - - | 1733 |
| Enlarged - - - - - - | 1792 |
| Burnt down, September 20, - - - | 1808 |
| Opera House, built - - - - | 1704 |
| Burnt down - - - - - | 1789 |
| Pantheon, Oxford street, opened - - - | 1772 |
| Converted to an opera house - - - | 1784 |
| Burnt - - - - - - | 1792 |
| Astley's Amphitheatre, burnt - - - | 1794 |
| Royal Circus, Blackfriars, burnt - - - | 1805 |

[Sadler's Wells, 18 persons killed by an *alarm* of fire, October 15, 1807.]

## OBITUARY.

### MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

### DEATH OF MR. CRAN.

LETTERS have just been received by the directors from Mr. Loveless, at Madras, and from Mr. Des Granges, at Vizigapatam, dated January 20, and February 27, 1809. By these letters they have received the very afflicting information of the death of a most worthy and valuable missionary, Mr. GEORGE CRAN. Concerning this mournful event, his colleague, Mr. Des Granges,

thus writes: " Our dear brother was severely attacked by a bilious fever in November last, which in a few days reduced him to a very weak and low state of body. By the advice of the physician he undertook a tour to the northward, in company with major-general Gowdie," &c. He appeared, for a time, to have gained strength, but became much worse, when, at a town called Chicacole, about 74 miles from Vizigapatam. Dr. Fleming, perceiving his danger, wrote to Mr. Des Granges, who immediately set off to visit him, but did not arrive till six hours after he had breathed his last. On Mr. D. devolved the painful office of committing his remains to the grave. He closed a holy and useful life on Friday, Jan. 6. " This," says Mr. D. " was a severe stroke to me. I had great difficulty to bear up under it; but God strengthened me! He assuaged my grief for the moment, and forced me to say, Thy will be done! Still my heart is heavy, and reflection on my loss makes me lament over the mountains of India, as David lamented over the mountains of Gilboa, on the loss of his beloved Jonathan."

Mr. D. has sent extracts of letters from Mr. Cran, written to him during his journey, which show the pious state of his mind, and the earnest desire he retained to the last to be useful. He had acquired the Telinga language, and preached in it but a few days before his death. In a letter, dated Chatterpore, Dec. 17, he says, " I have spent many pleasant hours with the natives, and found many very desirous to know more of the gospel. Travelling among them, and proclaiming the good news of salvation, is certainly delightful work."

Mr. Loveless expresses himself, in relation to this distressing circumstance, thus: " It has pleased the allwise Disposer of events to take to himself our dearly beloved brother, George Cran. He fell asleep in Jesus on the 6th instant, at Chicacole, whilst on a journey with major-general Gowdie for the benefit of his health, which also afforded him an excellent opportunity of preaching the gospel to the natives; in which blessed work he was employed till within a few days of his death. Brother Des Granges had the painful office of interring his dearly beloved colleague at a distance from home, and among strangers, having also been deprived of the painful pleasure of receiving his dying commands, and hearing from his lips those professions of faith in the glorious gospel, which he was so desirous of making known to the perishing millions of

Hindoostan, and which brother D would have communicated for the comfort of his friends and fellow labourers, and the edification of the church at large."

"How mysterious," he justly adds, "are the ways of Providence, in thus removing a young man, in the prime of life, who had just attained the knowledge of the language, by which he was enabled to make known to the poor heathen 'the unsearchable riches of Christ!' In this we are called 'to be still, and know that he is God;' and, though mysterious, his ways are neither unwise, unjust, nor unkind, as we shall see hereafter. O that this may have a due influence on me, to make me more zealous and devoted in the work of the Lord, and to incline many to offer themselves as missionaries in this country, where millions are crying, 'Come over and help us.'

To these pious reflections no addition is necessary. The residue of the Spirit is with the Lord, who, we trust, will strengthen the mission by the speedy arrival of the brethren Gordon and Lee, who sailed from America in May last, to join the brethren at Vizigapatam.

## POETRY.

### A MORNING MEDITATION.

Psalm iii. 5. *I laid me down and slept; I awaked, for the Lord sustained me.*

Source of my life! to thee I raise
My early grateful songs of praise;
Thy ear received my evening cry,
And all the night thy care was nigh.

While thousands scarce could find the bed,
Where to repose the wearied head;
While thousands *sitting* all night groan,
At home, at ease, I *laid me down.*

See fierce affliction, wounding care,
Enter yon chamber of despair;
The wretch has painful vigils kept,
Reclin'd in vain—while *I have slept.*

At midnight hour triumphant death
From sleeping thousands stole the breath;
The silver cord of life he broke,
But, wondrous mercy, *I awoke*.

Great God, accept my morning strains,
Thy hand alone this life sustains;
My sins forgive, through Jesus' blood,
And may I ever live to God. O.

WRITTEN DURING A HEAVY SHOWER OF RAIN.

Almighty God, who reign'st on high,
And bidst the vivid lightnings fly,
Command'st the muttering thunders roll,
While the earth rocks from pole to pole!

Now by thy power the rains descend,
And mingling elements contend;
Now whistling winds rush down amain,
Or rudely roar across the plain!

How great that glorious power must be,
Who bade the muriated sea
Divide! bade part toward heav'n to fly,
Part from the fair cerulean sky!

Descend, descend thou copious show'r,
An emblem of Jehovah's pow'r;
Spread thy delightful fragrance round,
And sweetly quench the thirsty ground!

When all things, Lord, are at an end,
And fruitful show'rs no more descend.
When thou shalt, in thy holy ire,
Rain on the world consuming fire;

May I, a monument of grace,
Behold my Saviour face to face,
To thee my sweetest anthems pay,
And praise thee in eternal day. J. H.